

Maryland Historical Trust

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No.

1. Name of Property (indicate preferred name)

historic Tyler House

other

2. Location

street and number 149 South Adams Street

city, town Rockville

vicinity Rockville Heights

county Montgomery

3. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Mrs. Ruby Tyler

street and number 149 South Adams Street

telephone

city, town Rockville

state

Maryland

zip code

20850

4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Montgomery County

liber 766 folio 64

city, town Rockville, Maryland

tax map GR32

tax parcel P629

tax ID number 00205326

5. Primary Location of Additional Data

- ☐ Contributing Resource in National Register District
☒ Contributing Resource in Local Historic District
☐ Determined Eligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
☐ Determined Ineligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
☐ Recorded by HABS/HAER
☐ Historic Structure Report or Research Report at MHT
☐ Other: _____

6. Classification

| Category | Ownership | Current Function | Resource Count |
|---|---|--|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> district | <input type="checkbox"/> public | <input type="checkbox"/> agriculture | Contributing |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private | <input type="checkbox"/> commerce/trade | Noncontributing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> structure | <input type="checkbox"/> both | <input type="checkbox"/> defense | <input type="checkbox"/> buildings |
| <input type="checkbox"/> site | | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> domestic | <input type="checkbox"/> sites |
| <input type="checkbox"/> object | | <input type="checkbox"/> education | <input type="checkbox"/> structures |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> funerary | <input type="checkbox"/> objects |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> government | <input type="checkbox"/> Total |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> health care | |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> industry | |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> landscape | |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> recreation/culture | |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> religion | |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> social | |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> transportation | |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> work in progress | |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> unknown | |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> vacant/not in use | |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> other: | |

Number of Contributing Resources
previously listed in the Inventory

7. Description

Inventory No. _____

Condition

| | |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent | <input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated |
| <input type="checkbox"/> good | <input type="checkbox"/> ruins |
| <input type="checkbox"/> fair | <input type="checkbox"/> altered |

Prepare both a one paragraph summary and a comprehensive description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

This 1.5-story stucco over frame cottage faces east on South Adams Street, near its intersection with Maryland Avenue. The asymmetrical house, with a square footprint, supports a steeply pitched asphalt-shingled gable roof and rests on a beveled concrete block foundation. Under the ownership of the Tyler family since 1939, the house has been well maintained and is in excellent condition. Although it has been expanded on the south facade, the 1940 addition is compatible in scale, and the house retains its original English cottage style architecture and its original windows and doors. The .321-acre yard has many mature trees and plantings. There is a curved flagstone walkway from the driveway to concrete steps that lead to the front door.



A projecting 1 1/2 -story gable and entry bay dominate the north bay of the front (east) façade. The front entry is accessed through a recessed flat-arched vestibule. The original three-light paneled door is flanked by a pair of small six-light casement windows. On the second floor, there is a larger, single double-hung window centered in the gable.



The first floor of the center bay contains a trio of six over six windows. A similar arrangement is located directly above in a second floor dormer. There is a common bond brick chimney on the south end wall. A one-story, one bay rectangular addition with clapboard siding extends the length of the south façade. It is set back from the front façade and has a low-pitched side-gable roof and a poured concrete foundation. There is a single eight over eight double-hung window on the east façade of the addition facing the street.

There is a double-hung window pair on the south façade of the addition. This family room addition was built by owner Frank Tyler in 1940, shortly after the Tylers purchased the property. There is a single

Maryland Historical Trust

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. M

Name
Continuation Sheet

Number 7 Page 1

double-hung window on the original south wall. The second floor of the south façade includes two double-hung windows in the gable.



Rear screened porch



Tripartite window in addition

The rear (west) façade has a wide roof dormer with three six over six double hung windows. A screened porch off the first floor is accessed by a kitchen door. There are two double hung windows (one on the screened porch and one outside of it), and a tripartite picture window centered in the south addition. The rear wall of the addition is flush with the rear wall of the original house.

A side entry on the north facade is centered in the gable end. The projecting front entry bay and a rear dormer and porch broaden this façade. There is a double window to the right of the door and a single to the left. One window in the gable is centered over the door and another is set higher in the gable to the right. A granite mill stone is set into a concrete step that leads from the driveway to the side door. The



North side entry door



Mill stone set in concrete step



Maryland Historical Trust

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. M

Name
Continuation Sheet

Number 7 Page 2

origin of the mill stone is unknown but it installed when the Ingalls owned the house, probably when the house was built. Like the stuccoed exterior and other Tudoresque elements, it is an example of the crafts motif.

Inside the house, the first floor consists of an entry hall, a kitchen with a rear door to the screened porch, dining room, living room and family room. The wood-paneled family room addition is one step down from the living room. There is a small coat closet with a window to the right of the front entrance hall and a half bath to the left with two windows. The stairway to the second floor is along the right wall of the entry hall. The second story contains three bedrooms and a full bath. Rooms are heated with radiators, and there are unit air conditioners.



The driveway is paved and ends at a single-car detached garage with German siding on the north property line. The garage was built at the same time as the house. It has a gable roof covered with asphalt shingles and a concrete block foundation. The garage door is wood and has no windows. There is a single six-light window on the rear façade. It is a representative garage of the time period, and exemplifies the significant role the automobile was beginning to play in the 1930s.

8. Significance

Inventory No. _____

| Period | Areas of Significance | Check and justify below | | |
|---|--|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699 | <input type="checkbox"/> agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> economics | <input type="checkbox"/> health/medicine | <input type="checkbox"/> performing arts |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799 | <input type="checkbox"/> archeology | <input type="checkbox"/> education | <input type="checkbox"/> industry | <input type="checkbox"/> philosophy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> invention | <input type="checkbox"/> politics/government |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-1999 | <input type="checkbox"/> art | <input type="checkbox"/> entertainment/ recreation | <input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> religion |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2000- | <input type="checkbox"/> commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> ethnic heritage | <input type="checkbox"/> law | <input type="checkbox"/> science |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> communications | <input type="checkbox"/> exploration/ settlement | <input type="checkbox"/> literature | <input type="checkbox"/> social history |
| | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> community planning | | <input type="checkbox"/> maritime history | <input type="checkbox"/> transportation |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> conservation | | <input type="checkbox"/> military | <input type="checkbox"/> other: _____ |

Specific dates

Architect/Builder: Charles West

Construction dates 1931

Evaluation for:

☐ National Register

☒ Maryland Register

☐ not evaluated

Prepare a one-paragraph summary statement of significance addressing applicable criteria, followed by a narrative discussion of the history of the resource and its context. (For compliance projects, complete evaluation on a DOE Form – see manual.)

Statement of Significance

The house at 149 South Adams Street is an excellent example of revival-style period architectural design and reflects the tastes of the era. It was constructed by local builder Charles West in 1931.¹ The environmental setting is intact, as is its massing and its footprint, though there is a one-room first floor addition. The property is a remnant of the large and elaborate Rockville Heights subdivision, being built on originally platted lot 4 of block 7 at the far northern end of the planned development. The house was identified as a historic resource in Rockville's Historic Resources Management Plan of 1986 within the context Maturation and Expansion of the County Seat, 1873-1931, Theme 2: Architecture, Landscape Architecture, Community Planning, 1893-1931 Building Phase, and is listed in the City's Historic Buildings Catalog, published in 1989.² This is an update of an MHT form that was produced in 1984 (M:26/22/2).

History and Support

The Carter and Dove families, joined by marriage, owned and farmed the land to the south of The Rockville Academy, located at the southwest corner of South Adams and West Jefferson Streets. In 1889, J. Maury Dove and his wife subdivided 260 acres into "Rockville Heights", hoping to attract wealthy Washingtonians as well as the old families of Rockville to the large lots and numerous amenities. Like its competitor, West End Park, Rockville Heights was planned in 1890 to include large lots, parks, boulevards and circles in anticipation of an upscale residential development. It was platted with generous lots and picturesque roads, in the fashion of the late 19th century garden suburbs being built nationwide. Local members of the Peter, Vinson, Hunter, Higgins and Veirs families purchased lots in Rockville Heights. But like the West End development, the Rockville Heights subdivision never fully materialized as planned. A handful of fine homes was built in the Heights, particularly on lots close to the Courthouse, but residential development was slow, due to litigation over land titles and economic depressions in the 1890s.

¹ Per interview with Mrs. Tyler 1/07

² *Rockville Historic Buildings Catalog*, July 1989, p. 24 and *Historic Resources Management Plan*, 1986, p. 131

Maryland Historical Trust

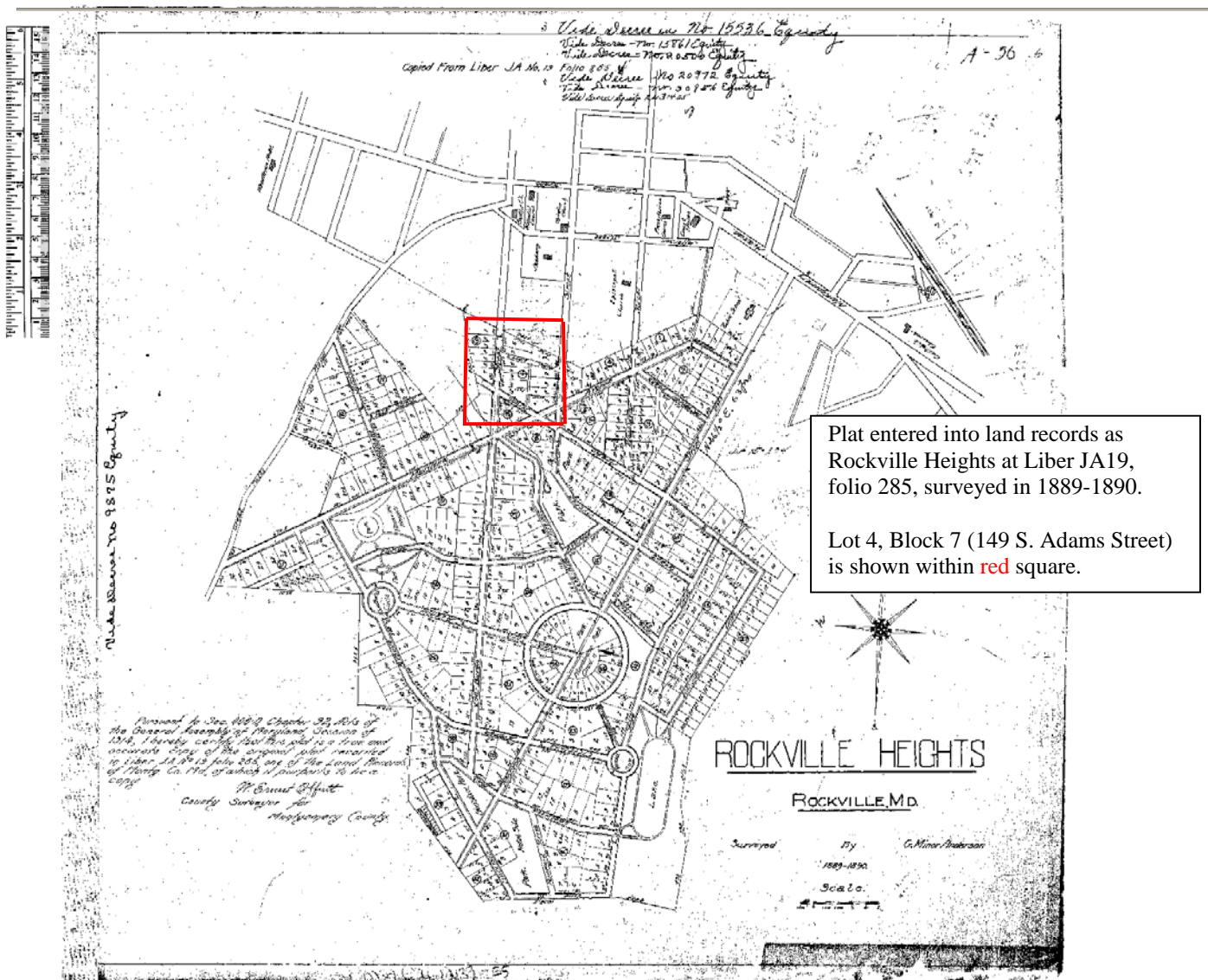
Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. M

Name
Continuation Sheet

Number 8 Page 1

Many of the platted lots remained vacant until well into the 20th century. The area immediately south of the Rockville Academy along South Adams Street was one of the last to be developed.



Maryland Historical Trust

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. M

Name
Continuation Sheet

Number 8 Page 2

Amelia Higgins, sister of real estate agent Frank Higgins and daughter of Rockville mercantile owner John Hamilton Higgins (who also was one of the Town's first commissioners), purchased lot 4 in block 7 in July 1890 for \$500. The deed stated that "no dwelling house is to be built within 15 feet of the front line, no stable, cowhouse or privy within 25 feet of any street..."³ Miss Higgins owned the property for 26 years before selling it to Luther A. Hoellman in 1916.⁴ Mr. Hoellman sold the lot to Norman L. Ingalls, Jr. in 1931 who hired Charles West to build the house the same year.⁵

Rockville's population increased by 24%, from 1,145 in 1920 to 1,422 in 1930, and by 44% from 1930 to 1940.⁶ The 1931 completion of the fourth and largest courthouse in Rockville symbolized the growth that was occurring countywide in the early 20th century. Rockville's first permanent post office was dedicated at the corner of Washington Street and Montgomery Avenue in 1939.

Rockville still provided a bucolic suburban residential setting within urban commuting range in the first half of the 20th century. However, the style and scale of single-family dwellings was changing and several new architectural styles became popular. The large ornate Victorian house gave way to compact, open bungalows and then to revival styles that evoked earlier times. Modest dwellings built from the 1910s through the 1940s – bungalows, small cottages, craftsman and Cape Cod styles – were nestled into smaller lots throughout Rockville neighborhoods. Garages became the predominant, and often the only, outbuilding of this period.

Beall's subdivision, Croydon Park and South Adams Street were three major residential development areas in Rockville in the 1920s and 1930s. Between the world wars, the 100 block of South Adams Street filled in with modest homes in a variety of architectural styles. Eighteen of the 22 houses on this block were built in the 1920s-1940s. Before it was developed, this block of South Adams Street was an unpaved street that faded into fields and woods and dead-ended at Maryland Avenue, which was also unpaved. For decades, local boys hunted birds and squirrels in the intervening fields and woods, and wild strawberries grew at the south end of the block where two large homes stood at the meeting of Adams and Maryland Avenue.⁷ (140 S. Adams Street, built 1905 and 18 Maryland Avenue, built 1897).

Rockville merchants, professionals and speculators – some of them second and third generation townspeople – built Colonial Revival, American Four Square, Arts and Crafts, and Bungalow style homes on South Adams Street. Some deeds stated that the lots were 'for exclusive residential use, and the

³ Montgomery County Land Records, JA 19/420 (1890)

⁴ Montgomery County Land Records, 260/271.

⁵ Montgomery County Land Records 522/361 and per interview with Ruby Tyler

⁶ U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census.

⁷ Rockville Portrait of a City, Eileen McGuckian, 2001, p. 101.

Maryland Historical Trust

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. M

Name
Continuation Sheet

Number 8 Page 3

building must cost at least \$4,000.’⁸ Construction activity continued through the 1940s, although a proposal for an apartment building next to the Academy was withdrawn by the property owner in 1938 because of local opposition.⁹ Around this time South Adams Street was paved, but homeowners still raised chickens at this edge of town.¹⁰ Sidewalks were installed in the 1950s.

**1949
Sanborne
Map**

**149 South
Adams
Street**



Many of the homes on South Adams Street have only known a few owners; resident turnover has been limited. Because of its close-in location, South Adams Street has been susceptible to traffic and land use pressures, but it has retained its residential charm. Some of the Rockville Heights houses disappeared mid-20th century during the expansion of nearby government buildings.

Frank and Ruby Tyler lived in Washington, D.C. following their 1935 marriage. Shortly thereafter, they rented the house at 149 S. Adams Street from their friends, the Ingalls. Mr. Tyler was an attorney practicing in Rockville. When Mr. and Mrs. Ingalls divorced, Mr. Ingalls decided to sell the house and he gave the Tylers the first option to buy it.¹¹ They purchased the house from Mr. Ingalls in January 1940 for \$7,500.¹²

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Minutes of Rockville Mayor and Council, June 14 & 19, 1938.

¹⁰ Rockville Portrait of a City, Eileen McGuckian, 2001, p. 101.

¹¹ Interview with Ruby Tyler, 2007.

¹² Montgomery County Land Records, 766/64

Maryland Historical Trust

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. M

Name

Continuation Sheet

Number 8 Page 4

Mrs. Ruby Tyler was born in Poolesville in 1909 to Thomas Benjamin and Myrtle Best Gott. The Gott family dates to the early 17th century in Maryland and is associated with its settlement history. The Gotts were a prominent family in the Medley District #3 of Montgomery County.¹³ Mrs. Tyler has ancestors (Gotts) who assisted in the establishment of American independence during the Revolutionary War and she is a member of the Chevy Chase chapter of the DAR.¹⁴

Ruby was an only child. Her family moved to Rockville when she was seven years old and she grew up just a few blocks from her current home. She graduated from Richard Montgomery High School in 1927 (then it was Rockville High School). According to a 1996 oral history, she originated the name "The Rocket" for the high school yearbook and Richard Montgomery is still the home of "The Rockets" today.¹⁵ Mrs. Tyler continues to reside at 149 S. Adams Street.

Frank Ames Tyler, Jr. was born in Hyattsville. His father was a Methodist minister and was born in Frederick, MD. The elder Tyler lived at 124 S. Van Buren Street following his retirement in 1939 after preaching for 43 years. Frank, Jr.'s mother was Margaret Linthicum Tyler and Frank had five siblings, several of whom also lived in Rockville. In addition to practicing law in Rockville for 34 years, Frank Tyler, Jr. was president of the Rockville Rotary Club in 1960 and 1961. He was the first president of the Park Street Elementary School PTA and served as Chair of the Rockville United Methodist Church Board of Trustees. He died in 1973 at age 67.¹⁶ The Tylers raised three daughters at 149 S. Adams Street, two of whom live in the West End of Rockville.

The Tudor style was fading from national prominence by the late 1930s, after a resurgence of popularity in the 1920s and early 1930s. Other examples in Rockville include the Tylers' daughter's (Mary Vitol) house at 11 Wall Street (built c.1933), 202 Frederick Avenue in Lincoln Park, and 406 Great Falls Road (c.1939).

¹³ History of Western Maryland, Vol.1, J. Thomas Scharf, p.730.

¹⁴ Applicant's Working Sheet for entry to The National Society, Daughters of the American Revolution (on file at the Montgomery County Historical Society and confirmed by Mrs. Tyler

¹⁵ Peerless Rockville files

¹⁶ Obituary, Montgomery County Historical Society

Maryland Historical Trust Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. M

Name
Continuation Sheet

Number 8 Page 5

9. Major Bibliographical References

Inventory No. _____

Maryland Department of Assessments and Taxation Records, Montgomery County Plat and Land Records, Peerless Rockville files, Montgomery County Historical Society files, 1949 Sanborne Map, interview with Mrs. Ruby Tyler, January 2007.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of surveyed property 0.321 acre

Acreage of historical setting _____

Quadrangle name _____

Quadrangle scale: _____

Verbal boundary description and justification

11. Form Prepared by

| | | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|-----------|------------|
| name/title | Cindy Kebba | | |
| organization | City of Rockville | date | March 2007 |
| street & number | | telephone | |
| city or town | | state | |

The Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust
DHCD/DHCP
100 Community Place
Crownsville, MD 21032-2023
410-514-7600